2 3 4 5 6 7	Joel E. Boxer - State Bar No. 50169 jeb@birdmarella.com Bonita D. Moore - State Bar No. 221479 bdm@birdmarella.com Mary H. Hansel - State Bar No. 223515 mhh@birdmarella.com BIRD, MARELLA, BOXER, WOLPERT, NESSIM, DROOKS & LINCENBERG, F 1875 Century Park East, 23rd Floor Los Angeles, California 90067-2561 Telephone: (310) 201-2100 Facsimile: (310) 201-2110  Attorneys for James P. Spears and Andrew	P.C.
8 9	M. Wallet as Co-Conservators of the Estate of Britney Jean Spears, on behalf of Defendant Britney Jean Spears	
10	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA	
11	FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CENTRAL DISTRICT	
12		•
13	SAM LUTFI, an individual,	CASE NO. BC 406904
14	Plaintiff,	Assigned to the Honorable Suzanne G. Bruguerā, Dept. 71
15	vs.	•
16	LYNNE IRENE SPEARS, an individual,	THE CO-CONSERVATORS' MOTION IN LIMINE NO. 1: TO QUASH PLAINTIFF'S RENEWED NOTICE
17	JAMES PARNELL SPEARS, an individual, BRITNEY JEAN SPEARS, an individual; and DOES 1 through 25,	TO PRODUCE CONSERVATEE BRITNEY SPEARS AS A WITNESS
18	inclusive,	AT TRIAL
19	Defendants.	[Concurrently-Filed Request for Judicial Notice Nos. 1 & 2; Declaration of Joel E.
20	·	Boxer; Declaration of Samuel D. Ingham III]
21	·	Date: September 25, 2012
22		Time: 10:00 a.m. Dept: 71
23		•
24	•	Action Filed: February 3, 2009 Trial Date: October 1, 2012
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THE CO-CONSERVATORS' MOTION IN LIMINE NO. 1: TO QUASH PLAINTIFF'S RENEWED NOTICE TO PRODUCE CONSERVATEE BRITNEY SPEARS AS A WITNESS AT TRANSPORTED OF THE PRODUCE CONSERVATE BRITNEY SPEARS AS A WITNESS AT TRANSPORTED OF T

2901847.1

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that at the Final Status Conference currently set for September 25, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. in Department 71 of this Court, located at 111 North Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, or at a date, place and time set by the Court, Andrew M. Wallet and James P. Spears, as Co-Conservators of the Estate of Britney Jean Spears ("the Co-Conservators"), will and hereby move pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 1987.1 to quash Plaintiff's Renewed Notice To Produce Britney Spears as a Witness at Trial ("Notice To Appear").

This motion is made on the following grounds:

- Britney Spears ("Britney") is, and has since February 1, 2008 been, under a
  conservatorship supervised by the probate department of this Court (the
  "Probate Court"). The Probate Court has continuing and exclusive jurisdiction
  over all matters affecting the health and welfare of the Conservatee.
- 2. On April 27, 2011, the Probate Court, by order signed by Judge Goetz, expressly directed that Britney's Co-Conservators could not produce Britney as a witness at the trial of this action.
- 3. As a matter of law established by an unbroken line of appellate precedent cited below, no other judge or department of this court has jurisdiction or power to interfere with the existing and continuing Probate Court jurisdiction or to vacate, revise or countermand the Probate Court's order to the Co-Conservators. Since the Notice to Appear has the effect of a subpoena, seeking to compel Britney to appear as a witness at trial, even though the Probate Court has precluded such appearance, the Notice to Appear must be quashed as a matter of law.
- 4. Plaintiff has known about Judge Goetz's order for more than a year, yet has not they have not taken any action in Judge Goetz's court to modify, to vacate or to seek reconsideration of or exception to her order. Accordingly, Plaintiff has waived any right to compel Britney's appearance as a witness in this case.

Pursuant to Local Rule 3.57, counsel for the Co-Conservators met and conferred with Plaintiff's counsel as to the entirety of the relief herein requested. Plaintiff's counsel

## MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

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#### INTRODUCTION

Plaintiff's Renewed Notice To Produce Britney Spears as a Witness at Trial ("Notice To Appear") must be quashed because (1) the Co-Conservators are obligated to comply with a long-existing order of the Probate Court that explicitly prohibits them from producing their Consevatee, Britney Spears ("Britney"), from appearing as a witness in the upcoming trial in this case; (2) as a matter of law established by an unbroken line of precedents, neither the Plaintiff Sam Lutfi ("Plaintiff" or "Lutfi"), nor any court (except the Probate Court that issued the order) may vacate, modify, countermand or refuse to enforce the Probate Court order; (3) by purporting to invoke this department's subpoena powers to direct the presence of a witness that the Probate Court has ordered cannot be present, Plaintiff is violating the Probate Court's directives and is seeking to interfere with the exclusive jurisdiction of another department over the subject matter, something neither he nor this Court can do; and (4) Plaintiff has known about the existence and scope of the Probate Court's preclusion order for over a year, yet he has not sought vacation, modification, reconsideration or appellate review of that order and, thus, cannot seek revision or modification of the order now, on the eve of trial.

For these reasons, the Notice to Appear must be quashed as a matter of law.

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#### FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Beginning in 2007, Britney's mental and physical health was precarious; by January 2008, she was placed in two involuntary psychiatric holds in Los Angeles hospitals. As a result, on February 1, 2008, Judge Goetz, sitting in the Probate Department granted temporary conservatorship petitions over her person and estate to Britney's father, James P. Spears. (Declaration of Joel E. Boxer ("Boxer Decl.") ¶ 6, Exhs. A-D.) A professional fiduciary, attorney Andrew M. Wallet, was named by the Court as a Co-Conservator of the estate. Samuel D. Ingham III, a respected, certified specialist in Probate, Estate Planning

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and Trust law with more than 35 years of experience in conservatorship matters, was appointed by the court as Ms. Spears' personal counsel. (Boxer Decl. ¶ 7, Exh. E; Declaration of Samuel D. Ingham III ("Ingham Decl.") ¶¶ 1-2.)

Judge Goetz has had – and, to this day, continues to have – responsibility for supervising the Conservatee's welfare and for directing her Co-Conservators since the conservatorship proceedings began on February 1, 2008, well before the instant lawsuit was filed.  $\P$  1, 4.)

On April 27, 2011, upon application of Britney's court-appointed personal counsel, Mr. Ingham, Judge Goetz issued the Sealed Order, prohibiting the Co-Conservators from producing Britney as a witness for trial, deposition or any other type of examination conducted in connection with this action. (Request for Judicial Notice No. 2 ("RJN No. 2") ¶ 1, Exh. AA; Ingham Decl. ¶ 5.) The Sealed Order was first sealed conditionally by order of Judge Goetz on April 27, 2011 (the "Sealing Order"). (RJN No. 2 ¶ 1, Exh. BB; Ingham Decl. ¶ 5.)² Judge Goetz subsequently made the Sealing Order permanent at a hearing in open court on May 12, 2011.³ (Ingham Decl. ¶ 8.)

On May 2, 2011 — 16 months ago — Lutfi's counsel was given notice of both the Sealing Order and the then-conditionally Sealed Order, including its substance. (Ingham Decl. ¶ 6.) Lutfi has never taken any action in the Probate Court to vacate, to modify, or to request reconsideration of either the Sealed Order or the Sealing Order; nor has he sought

Judge Goetz's responsibilities are as to both the Conservatorship of the Person of Britney Jean Spears and the Conservatorship of the Estate of Britney Jean Spears ("Spears Conservatorship"). The authority of the Court over guardianships and conservatorships derive from "the parens patriae power of the state to protect incompetent persons." Conservatorship of Wendland, 26 Cal. 4th 519 (2001).

A copy of the April 27, 2011 Sealing Order has also been submitted to this Court as Exhibit AAA to the concurrently-filed Request for Judicial Notice No. 1 ("RJN No. 1").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> By reason of the Sealing Order, the Co-Conservators are prohibited from publicly disclosing the content of the April 27, 2011 Sealed Order. Therefore, the Co-Conservators are filing sealed and unsealed versions of this motion.

In this action, Lutfi moved to compel Britney's submission tor an Independent Medical Examination ("IME"). At the hearing on June 15, 2011, Judge Sinanian denied Lutfi's discovery motion and suggested that he take action in the Probate Court should he desire modification of the Probate Court's Orders. (Boxer Decl. ¶ 14, Exh. N.) Lutfi failed to seek reconsideration or review of Judge Sinanian's order, and he took no action in furtherance of Judge Sinanian's suggestion that Lutfi take action in the Probate Court if Lutfi had any problem with the Probate Court's orders. (Boxer Decl. ¶ 14; Ingham Decl. ¶ 9.)

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#### **ARGUMENT**

- A. THE NOTICE TO APPEAR MUST BE QUASHED BECAUSE CASE LAW

  UNEQUIVOCALLY ESTABLISHES THAT THIS COURT HAS NO

  JURISDICTION TO COMPEL BRITNEY SPEARS' ATTENDANCE AT

  TRIAL SINCE HER ATTENDANCE IS PRECLUDED BY A LONG
  STANDING ORDER OF JUDGE GOETZ.
  - Judge Goetz Has Continuing And Exclusive Jurisdiction Over Matters
     Affecting The Conservatee's Health And Welfare

Judge Goetz, sitting as a Superior Court Judge in the Probate Department, has had continuing and exclusive jurisdiction over the Conservatorships established in 2008. <sup>4</sup> See Guardianship of Kemp, 43 Cal. App. 3d 758, 761 (1974) ("The probate court has exclusive jurisdiction of guardianship proceedings, and after a guardian has been appointed, the court has continuing jurisdiction over the guardian and the administration of the ward's affairs.")(emphasis added); see also Browne v. Superior Ct., 16 Cal. 2d 593, 597 (1940)

The "probate court" is a department of the Superior Court, and is a court of general jurisdiction "with broad equitable powers." *Guardianship of Kemp*, 43 Cal. App. 3d 758, 761 (1974); *Estate of Kraus*, 184 Cal. App. 4th 103, 114 (2010).

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("No other court, we believe, has power to interfere with that continuing control over the guardian; no other court could . . . instruct him as to his duties."); and *In re Marriage of Schenck*, 228 Cal. App. 3d 1474, 1477 (1991) (the law and motion department properly yielded to the family law department on an issue that would have affected its reserved jurisdiction).

2. Where, As Here, The Probate Court First Assumed Jurisdiction (And Continues To Have Jurisdiction) Over Matters Involving Britney's Welfare And Has Issued Orders Precluding Her Attendance At The Trial Of This Action, No Other Court (Including This One) Has Jurisdiction to Vacate, To Modify, To Countermand Or To Issue Any Directive That Is Inconsistent With The Probate Court's Orders.

A long and unbroken line of controlling appellate precedents establish that, where as here, a court has assumed jurisdiction over a matter and has issued orders in the case, no other court or department of the superior court can take action that contradicts those orders. See, e.g., Williams v. Superior Ct., 14 Cal. 2d 656, 662 (1939) ("it is beyond the jurisdictional authority of another department of the same court to interfere with the exercise of the power of the department to which the proceeding has been so assigned. . . If such were not the law, conflicting adjudications of the same subject-matter by different departments of the one court would bring about an anomalous situation and doubtless lead to much confusion."); Ford v. Superior Ct., 188 Cal. App. 3d 737, 741 (1986) (finding that and order "made in one department during the progress of a cause can neither be ignored nor overlooked in another department. . ."); Silverman v. Superior Ct., 203 Cal. App. 3d 145, 150-51 (1995) ("One department of the superior court cannot enjoin, restrain, or otherwise interfere with the judicial act of another department of the superior court... A judgment rendered in one department of the superior court is binding on that matter upon all other departments until such time as the judgment is overturned.""); In re Alberto, 102 Cal. App. 4th 421, 427-28 (2002) ("For one superior court judge, no matter how well intended, even if correct as a matter of law, to nullify a duly made, erroneous ruling of

another superior court judge places the second judge in the role of a one-judge appellate court.").<sup>5</sup>

Glade v. Glade, 38 Cal. App. 4th 1441 (1995) is particularly instructive on this issue. In Glade, the family law court had first acquired jurisdiction over certain property by virtue of marital dissolution proceedings. Id. at 1445. The trustee of a family trust then brought a civil action seeking to foreclose on a residence that was community property. Id. The family law court issued an order staying the foreclosure action. Id. at 1447. The trial court judge in the foreclosure action refused to stay the foreclosure proceedings and granted summary judgment for the trust, stating that because his was a court of equal jurisdiction, the family law court had no authority to order a stay. Id. at 1448-49. The Court of Appeal reversed the trial court's grant of summary judgment in the foreclosure action. Id. at 1448-49, 1457-58.

The Court of Appeal in *Glade* held that the trial court judge had been barred from proceeding by virtue of the stay order. *Id.* at 1449, 1458. The Court noted that "the first court of equal dignity to assume and exercise jurisdiction over a matter acquires exclusive jurisdiction." *Id.* at 1450 (internal quotations omitted); *see also Williams v. Superior Court*, 14 Cal. 2d 656, 662-63 (1939) (finding that an order issued by another department purporting to invalidate a contempt order issued by the department before whom the proceedings were still pending was null and void). *Glade* noted this principle is particularly compelling for departments exercising distinct subject matter jurisdiction, such as "the family law court's broad jurisdictional authority where the right to and disposition of community property are concerned." *Id.; see also Slone v. Inyo County Juvenile Court*, 230 Cal. App. 3d 263, 269 (1991) (citing same principle).

If the law were otherwise and one department could interfere with orders issued by another department, then parties would be incentivized to forum shop until they were granted the relief they were seeking. See In re Alberto, 102 Cal. App. 4th at 427. "Such a procedure would instantly breed lack of confidence in the integrity of the courts." Id. (citing People v. Scofield, 249 Cal. App.2d 727, 734 (1967)).

Similarly, here the probate department has been given distinct subject matter jurisdiction by the Legislature over all matters affecting a conservatee's health and welfare. Moreover, as to primacy, the Spears conservatorship proceedings, which continue to this day, predate by one year Lutfi's civil suit, which was not filed until 2009. Thus, the Probate Court first assumed and still retains jurisdiction over matters affecting the conservatorships. Consistent with these principles, Judge Goetz's Sealed Order states that "[t]his [Probate Court] has exclusive jurisdiction to make an order directing the conservators to act." (RJN No. 2 ¶ 1, Exh. AA, ¶ 10.)

3. The Sealed Order Is Within The Jurisdiction Of The Conservatorship
Proceedings And No Other Court Can Disregard Or Countermand the
Order.

The Sealed Order is exclusively within the province of the conservatorship proceedings pending since 2008 before Judge Goetz.

(RJN No. 2 ¶ 1, Exh. AA, ¶ 10.); see also Probate Code section 1800.6

Sealed Order was issued upon the application of the independent court-appointed counsel for Britney, Samuel D. Ingham III, whose mandate is the protection of Britney's health and

By filing this motion to quash, the Co-Conservators do not waive and intend to preserve their objections to this Court's jurisdiction over this issue. It is unnecessary for the Co-Conservators to seek relief in the Probate Court given that the Sealed Order, still in full force, already addresses Britney's appearance at trial.

(RJN No. 2 ¶

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and contravene well-established principles of judicial governance.

# B. <u>Lutfi Has Had Notice Of The Sealed Order For More Than A Year And Has</u> Not Sought Any Relief From Judge Goetz Or The Court Of Appeal

Although Lutfi (through his counsel) had notice by May 2, 2011 of the substance of the then-conditionally Sealed Order and of the pending May 12, 2011 hearing regarding permanent sealing of the Sealed Order, Lutfi did not appear or object in the Probate Court after receiving such notice; he did not appear at the May 12, 2011 hearing before Judge Goetz when the Sealing Order was made permanent; nor has he otherwise attempted to take any steps in the Probate Court or at the appellate level to challenge Judge Goetz' orders. Even after the hearing on Lutfi's motion to compel Britney's IME, when Judge Sinanian in this action said the civil department would defer to Judge Goetz's order, Lutfi did nothing to seek reconsideration or review. At the June 15, 2011 hearing, the parties also discussed that Britney would not be a witness at trial and Plaintiff's counsel was directed by Judge Sinanian to seek review of Judge Goetz's order from her, the issuing jurist, if Plaintiff disagreed with it. (Boxer Decl. ¶ 14, Exh. N.)<sup>10</sup>

As Lutfi has not brought a proper challenge to the Sealed Order in the 16 months he has had notice of it, this Court should summarily dispose of his improper and underhanded attempt to invalidate Judge Goetz's order.

#### $\mathbf{IV}$

## **CONCLUSION**

For the foregoing reasons, the Co-Conservators' motion to quash Plaintiff's Notice

Ingham Decl., ¶ 9. Lutfi has challenged (so far unsuccessfully) at the trial and appellate levels *other* orders issued by the Probate Court in the conservatorship proceedings. (Boxer Decl., ¶ 13.).

Indeed, Plaintiff, recognizing the impact and authority of the Sealed Order and Judge Sinanian's June 15, 2011 ruling based on it, has recognized that these orders make Britney in effect unavailable in this action because Plaintiff, after the June 15, 2011 ruling, abandoned his then-pending efforts to take her deposition.

## PROOF OF SERVICE

## STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

I am employed in the County of Los Angeles, State of California. I am over the age of 18 and not a party to the within action; my business address is 1875 Century Park East, 23rd Floor, Los Angeles, California 90067-2561.

On August 31, 2012, I served the following document(s) described as THE CONSERVATORS' MOTION IN LIMINE NO. 1: TO QUASH PLAINTIFF'S RENEWED NOTICE TO PRODUCE CONSERVATEE BRITNEY SPEARS AS A WITNESS AT TRIAL [REDACTED VERSION] on the interested parties in this action as follows:

#### SEE ATTACHED SERVICE LIST

BY MAIL: By placing a true copy thereof in sealed envelopes addressed to the parties listed on the attached Service List and causing them to be deposited in the mail at Los Angeles, California. The envelopes were mailed with postage thereon fully prepaid. I am readily familiar with our firm's practice of collection and processing correspondence for mailing. It is deposited with the U.S. Postal Service on that same day in the ordinary course of business. I am aware that on motion of party served, service is presumed invalid if postal cancellation date or postage meter date is more than one day after date of deposit for mailing affidavit.

BY E-MAIL OR ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION: Based on a court order or an agreement of the parties to accept service by e-mail or electronic transmission, I caused the document(s) to be sent from e-mail address snj@birdmarella.com to the persons at the e-mail addresses listed in the Service List. I did not receive, within a reasonable time after the transmission, any electronic message or other indication that the transmission was unsuccessful.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on August 31, 2012, at Los Angeles, California.

Shemena N. Johnson

#### SERVICE LIST Lutfi v. Spears Case No. BC 406904

2	Case N
3	Leon J. Gladstone
4	Michael J. Aiken Gladstone Michel Weisberg Willner &
5	Sloane, ALC 4551 Glencoe Avenue, Suite 300
6	4551 Glencoe Avenue, Suite 300 Marina del Rey, CA 90292 Telephone: (310) 821-9000 Facsimile: (310) 775-8775
7	Email: lgladstone@gladstonemichel.com
8	Email: lgladstone@gladstonemichel.com Email: maiken@gladstonemichel.com Counsel for Defendant James P. Spears
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Stephen F. Rohde Rohde & Victoroff 1880 Century Park East, Suite 411 Los Angeles, CA 90067 Telephone: (310) 277-1482, ext. 13 Facsimile: (310) 277-1485 Email: ROHDEVICTR@aol.com Counsel for Lynne Spears

## **PROOF OF SERVICE**

## STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

I am employed in the County of Los Angeles, State of California. I am over the age of 18 and not a party to the within action; my business address is Steiner Attorney Service, 1513 Livonia Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90064.

On August 31, 2012, I served the following document(s) described as THE CONSERVATORS' MOTION IN LIMINE NO. 1: TO QUASH PLAINTIFF'S RENEWED NOTICE TO PRODUCE CONSERVATEE BRITNEY SPEARS AS A WITNESS AT TRIAL [REDACTED VERSION] on the interested parties in this action as follows:

Joseph D. Schleimer 9401 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1250 Beverly Hills, CA 90212 Telephone: (310) 273-9807 Facsimile: (310) 273-9809 Attorney for Sam Lutfi

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**BY PERSONAL SERVICE:** By delivering a true copy thereof by hand to the office of the persons listed on the attached Service List.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on August 31, 2012, at Los Angeles, California.

Melvin Steiner

The state of the state of